

Wesley, J. J. A

LETTER

TO THE

Rev. Mr. HORNE:

OCCASIONED

By his late SERMON

Preached before the

UNIVERSITY of OXFORD.



1762

L O N D O N,

Printed: and sold by W. FLEXNEY, near Gray's-Inn
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L E T T E R

TO THE

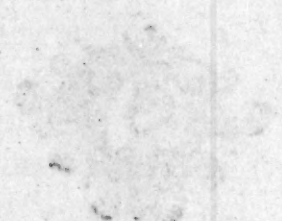
Rev. Mr. HORN

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A
L E T T E R

TO THE
Rev. Mr. H O R N E.

REVEREND SIR,

W H E N you spoke of "*Heresies* making their
" periodical Revolutions," of "*Antinomia-*
" *nism* rampant among us," and immediately after,
of "the *New Lights* at the *Tabernacle* and *Four-*
" *dery*:" Must not your Hearers naturally think,
that Mr. *Whitefield* and I were reviving those He-
resies? But do you know the Persons of whom you
speak? Have you ever conversed with them? Have
you read their Writings? If not, is it kind, is it just
to pass so severe a Censure upon them? Had you
only taken the Trouble of reading one Tract, the
"Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," you
would have seen, that a great Part of what you as-
firm, is what I never denied. To put this beyond
Dispute, I beg leave to transcribe some Passage
from that Treatise; which will shew not only what
I teach now, but what I have taught for many Years.
I will afterward simply and plainly declare, where
in I as yet differ from you. And the rather, that
if I err therein, you may, by GOD's Assistance
convince me of it.

I. 1. "*Justification* sometimes means, our Acquittal at the Last Day. But this is altogether out of the present Question: That *Justification* whereof our Articles and Homilies speak, meaning present Forgiveness and Acceptance with G O D; who therein ^a declares his Righteousness or Mercy, by or for the Remission of the Sins that are past ^b."

2. "I believe, ^c the *Condition* of this is Faith: I mean, not only, that without Faith we cannot be justified; but also, that as soon as any one has true Faith, in that Moment he is justified."

"^d Good Works follow this Faith, but cannot go before it: Much less can Sanctification, that is, a continued Course of good Works, springing from Holiness of Heart. But it is allowed, that entire Sanctification goes before our Justification at the Last Day."

"It is allowed also, that ^e Repentance, and ^f *Fruits meet for Repentance*, go before Faith. Repentance *absolutely must* go before Faith: Fruits meet for it, if there be opportunity. By Repentance I mean Conviction of Sin, producing real Desires and sincere Resolutions of Amendment: And by *Fruits meet for Repentance* ^g, forgiving our Brother ^h, ceasing from Evil, doing Good ⁱ, using the Ordinances of G O D, and in general ^k, obeying him according to the Measure of Grace we have received. But these I cannot as yet term *Good Works*, because they do not spring from Faith and the Love of G O D.

3. "^l Faith in general is a divine supernatural *ἔλεγχος* of Things not seen ^m, not discoverable by our bodily Senses, as being either past, future or spiritual. Justifying Faith implies, not only a di-

^a Rom. iii. 25. ^b Farther Appeal, Part I. p. 1, 2. ^c P. 4, &c.

^d Luke vi. 43. ^e Mark i. 15. ^f Matt. iii. 8. ^g Matt.

vi. 14, 15. ^h Luke iii. 4, 9, &c. ⁱ Matt. vii. 7. ^k Matt.

xxv. 29. ^l P. 5. ^m Heb. xi. 1.

vine ἑλσχος that GOD was in Christ, reconciling the World to himself, but a sure Trust and Confidence, that Christ died for my Sins, that he loved me, and gave himself for me^a. And the Moment a penitent Sinner believes this, GOD pardons and absolves him.

“ And as soon as his Pardon or Justification is witnessed to him by the Holy Ghost, he is saved. He loves GOD and all Mankind. He has *the Mind that was in Christ*, and Power to walk as he also walked. From that Time (unless he makes shipwreck of his Faith) Salvation gradually increases in his Soul. For ^b *so is the kingdom of GOD, as if a Man should cast Seed into the Ground,—and it springeth up, first the Blade, then the Ear, after that the full Corn in the Ear.*

4. “ Many Persons seem to be very confused as to the Nature of Justification, and speak as if they had never heard of any Justification, antecedent to that of the last Day. To clear up this, there needs only a close inspection of our Articles and Homilies: wherein Justification is always taken for the present Remission of our Sins.

“ But many are the Objections which have been warmly urged, against the Condition of Justification; Faith alone. A late Writer in particular, affirms this Doctrine is both unscriptural, and contrary to the Doctrine of the Church of *England*.

5. “ To prove, it is unscriptural, he alledges that Sanctification, according to Scripture, must go before it: To evince which, he cites the following Texts;—^c Preach Repentance and Remission of Sins: ^d Repent and be baptized every one of you, for the Remission of Sins: ^e Repent and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out.

^a Gal. ii. 20.

^b Mark iv. 27, &c.

^c Luke xxiv. 47.

^d Acts ii. 38.

^e Acts iii. 19.

" I conceive these, and all the Scriptures which can be quoted, to prove Sanctification antecedent to Justification, (if they do not relate to our final Justification) prove only (what I never denied) That Repentance or Conviction of Sin, and *Fruits meet for Repentance*, precede that Faith whereby we are justified: But by no means that the Love of GOD, or any Branch of true Holiness, must or can precede Faith.

6. " It is objected, secondly, that Justification by Faith alone, is not the Doctrine of the Church of *England*.

" In order to be clearly and fully satisfied, what the Doctrine of the Church of *England* is (as it stands opposite to the Doctrine of the *Antinomians*, on the one Hand, and to that of *Justification by Works* on the other) I will simply set down what occurs on this Head, either in her Liturgy, Articles or Homilies.

" Spare thou them, O GOD, which *confess their Faults*: Restore thou them that are *penitent*, according to thy Promises declared unto Mankind in Christ Jesu, our Lord.

" He pardoneth and absolveth all them that *truly repent* and *unfeignedly believe* his holy Gospel.

" Almighty GOD, who dost forgive the Sins of them that are *penitent*, create and make in us new and contrite Hearts; that we *worthily lamenting our Sins* and *acknowledging our Wretchedness*, may obtain of thee perfect Remission and Forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Collect for *Ash-Wednesday*.

" Almighty GOD, hath promised Forgiveness of Sins to all them that with *heartly Repentance* and *true Faith* turn unto him." *Communion Office*.

" Our Lord Jesus Christ hath left Power to absolve all Sinners who *truly repent* and *believe* in him." *Visitation of the Sick*.

" Give

“ Give him unfeigned *Repentance* and stedfast *Faith*, that his Sins may be blotted out.” *Ibid.*

“ He is a merciful Receiver of all true, *penitent* Sinners, and is ready to pardon us, if we come unto him with *faithful Repentance*.” *Communion Office.*

Infants indeed our Church supposes to be justified in Baptism, altho’ they cannot then either *believe* or *repent*. But she expressly requires both *Repentance* and *Faith*, in those who come to be baptized when they are of riper Years.

As earnestly therefore as our Church inculcates Justification by Faith alone, she nevertheless supposes *Repentance* to be previous to Faith, and *Fruits meet for Repentance*: Yea, and universal Holiness to be previous to final Justification, as evidently appears from the following Words.

“ Let us beseech him — that the rest of our Lives may be pure and holy, so that at the last we may come to his eternal Joy.” *Absolution.*

“ May we seriously apply our Hearts to that Holy and Heavenly Wisdom here, which may in the End bring us to Life Everlasting.” *Visitation of the Sick.*

“ Raise us from the Death of Sin unto the Life of Righteousness, — that at the last Day we may be found acceptable in thy Sight.” *Burial Office.*

“ If we from henceforth walk in his Ways, seeking always his Glory, Christ will set us on his Right Hand.” *Communion Office.*

We come next to the Articles of our Church: The former Part of the Ninth runs thus:

Of Original or Birth Sin.

“ Original Sin is the Fault and Corruption of the Nature of every Man — whereby Man is very far gone from Original Righteousness, and is of

his own Nature inclined to Evil, so that the Flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit: And therefore in every Person born into the World, it deserveth GOD's Wrath and Damnation."

Art. 10. *Of Free Will.*

"The Condition of Man after the Fall of *Adam* is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural Strength and Good Works to Faith and calling upon GOD. Wherefore we have no Power to do good Works, pleasant and acceptable to GOD, without the Grace of GOD by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good Will, and working with us when we have that good Will."

Art. 11. *Of the Justification of Man.*

"We are accounted Righteous before GOD, only for the Merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by Faith, and not for our own Works or Deservings. Wherefore that we are justified by Faith only, is a most wholesome Doctrine, and very full of Comfort, as is more largely express'd in the Homily of Justification."

I believe this Article relates to the *meritorious Cause* of Justification, rather than to the *Condition* of it. On this therefore I do not build any Thing concerning it, but on those that follow.

Art. 12. *Of Good Works.*

"Albeit that Good Works, which are the Fruits of Faith and follow after Justification, cannot put away our Sins — yet are they pleasing and acceptable to GOD in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively Faith: Insomuch that by

them a lively Faith may be as evidently known, as a Tree may be known by the Fruit."

We are taught here, 1. That *Good Works* in general, follow after Justification. 2. That they *spring out of* a true and lively Faith, that Faith whereby we are justified: 3. That true, justifying Faith may be as evidently known by them, as a Tree is discerned by the Fruit.

Does it not follow, that the supposing any *Good Work* to go before Justification, is full as absurd as the supposing an Apple or any other Fruit to grow before the Tree?

But let us hear the Church, speaking yet more plainly.

Art. 13. *Of Works done before Justification.*

" Works done before the Grace of Christ and the Inspiration of his Spirit, (i. e. before Justification, as the Title expresses it) are not pleasant to GOD, forasmuch as they spring not of Faith in Jesu Christ—Yea rather, for that they are not done as GOD hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the Nature of Sin."

It remains, to consider what occurs in the Homilies, first with regard to the *meritorious Cause* of our Justification, agreeable to the 11th, and then with regard to the *Condition* of it, agreeable to the 12th and 13th Articles.

" These Things must go together in our Justification; upon GOD's Part, his great Mercy and Grace; upon Christ's Part, the Satisfaction of GOD's Justice; and upon our Part, true and lively Faith in the Merits of Jesus Christ." *Homily on Salvation. Part 1.*

" So that the Grace of GOD doth not shut out the Justice (or Righteousness) of GOD in our Justification."

tification; but only shutteth out the Righteousness of Man—as to *deserving* our Justification.”

“ And therefore St. *Paul* declareth nothing on the Behalf of Man, concerning his Justification, but only a true Faith.”

“ And yet that Faith doth not shut out Repentance, Hope, Love, to be joined with Faith (that is, *afterwards*: see below) in every Man that is justified—Neither doth Faith shut out the Righteousness of our Good Works, necessarily to be done *afterwards*. But it excludeth them so, that we may not do them to the Intent, to be made Just (or, to be justified) by doing them.”

“ That we are *justified by Faith alone*, is spoken, to take away clearly all *Merit* of our Works, and wholly to ascribe the *Merit and Deserving* of our Justification unto Christ only.” *ibid. Part II.*

“ The true Meaning of the Saying, We be *justified by Faith only*, is this, We be justified by the *Merits* of Christ only, and not of our own Works.” *ibid. Part III.*

Thus far touching the *Meritorious Cause* of our Justification; refer'd to in the 11th Article. The 12th and 13th are a Summary of what now follows, with Regard to the *Condition* of it.

“ Of (Justifying) True Faith, three Things are specially to be noted; 1. That it bringeth forth Good Works. 2. That without it can no Good Works be done. 3. What Good Works it doth bring forth.” *Sermon on Faith, Part I.*

“ Without Faith can no Good Work be done, accepted and pleasant unto GOD. For as a Branch cannot bear Fruit of itself, saith our Saviour Christ, *except it abide in the Vine, so cannot you, except you abide in me.* Faith giveth Life to the Soul; and they be as much dead to GOD that lack Faith, as they be to the World whose Bodies lack Souls. Faith, that is done of us, is but dead

before GOD. Even as a Picture is but a dead Representation of the Thing itself, so be the Works of all unfaithful (unbelieving) Persons before GOD. They be but Shadows of lively and good Things, and not good Things indeed. For true Faith doth give Life to the Works, and without Faith no Work is Good before GOD." *ibid.*
Part III.

" We must set no Good Works before Faith, nor think that before Faith a Man may do any Good Works. For such Works are as the Course of an Horse that runneth out of the Way, which taketh great Labour, but to no Purpose." *ibid.*

" Without Faith we have no Virtues, but only the Shadows of them. All the Life of them that lack true Faith is Sin." *ibid.*

" As Men first have Life, and afterwards be nourished, so must our Faith go before, and after be nourished with Good Works. And Life may be without Nourishment, but Nourishment cannot be without Life." *Homily of Works annexed to Faith, Part I.*

" I can shew a Man, that by Faith without Works lived and came to Heaven. But without Faith never Man had Life. The Thief on the Cross only believed, and the most merciful GOD justified him. Truth it is, if he had lived and not regarded Faith and the Works thereof, he should have lost his Salvation again. But this I say, Faith by itself saved him. But Works by themselves never justified any Man."

" Good Works go not before, in him which should afterward be justified. But Good Works do follow after, when a Man is first justified." *Homily on Fasting, Part I.*

From the whole Tenor then of her Liturgy Articles and Homilies, the Doctrine of the Church of *England* appears to be this:

1. That no *Good Work*, properly so called, can go before Justification :

2. That no *Degree* of True Sanctification can be previous to it.

3. That as the *meritorious Cause* of Justification is the Life and Death of Christ ; so the *Condition* of it, is Faith, Faith alone ; and

4. That both inward and outward Holiness, are consequent on this Faith, and are the ordinary, stated Condition of Final Justification.

“ And what more can you desire, who have hitherto opposed *Justification by Faith alone*, merely upon a Principle of Conscience ; because you was zealous for Holiness and good Works. Do I not effectually secure these from Contempt, at the same Time that I defend the Doctrines of the Church ? I not only allow, but vehemently contend, that none shall ever enter into Glory, who is not holy on Earth, as well in Heart, as in all Manner of Conversation. I cry aloud, *Let all that have believed, be careful to maintain good Works ; and let every one that nameth the Name of Christ depart from all Iniquity.* I exhort even those who are conscious they do not believe, *cease to do evil, learn to do well : The Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand ; therefore repent, and bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance.* Are not these Directions the very same in Substance, which you yourself would give to Persons so circumstanced ? What means then the endless *Strife* of Words ? Or, what doth your arguing reprove ?

Many of those who are perhaps as zealous of good Works as you, think I have allowed you too much. Nay, my Brethren, but how can we help allowing it, if we allow the Scriptures to be from God ? For is it not written, and do not you yourselves believe, *Without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord ?* And how then, without fighting about Words, can we deny, that Holiness is a Condition

of final Acceptance? And, as to the first Acceptance or Pardon, does not all Experience as well as Scripture prove, That no Man ever yet truly *believed the Gospel*, who did not first repent? That none was ever yet truly *convinced of Righteousness*, who was not first *convinced of Sin*? Repentance therefore in this Sense, we cannot deny to be necessarily previous to Faith. Is it not equally undeniable, That the running back into known willful Sin, (suppose it were Drunkenness or Uncleaness) stifles that Repentance or Conviction? And can that Repentance come to any good Issue in his Soul, who resolves not to forgive his Brother? Or who obstinately refrains from what God convinces him is right, whether it be Prayer or hearing his Word? Would you scruple yourself to tell one of these, “ Why, if you *will* thus drink away all Conviction, how should you ever truly know your Want of Christ? Or consequently, believe in Him? If you *will* not forgive your Brother his Trespases, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you *your* Trespases. If you will not ask, how can you expect to receive? If you *will* not hear, how can *Faith come by Hearing*? It is plain, *You grieve the Spirit of God*; You *will not* have Him to reign over You. Take care that He do not utterly depart from you. For *unto him that bath, shall be given: But from him that bath not, i. e. uses it not, shall be taken away even that which he bath.*” Would you scruple, on a proper Occasion, to say this? You could not scruple it, if you believe the Bible. But in saying this, you allow all which I have said, *viz.* That previous to justifying Faith, there *must* be Repentance, and if Opportunity permit, *Fruits meet for Repentance.*

And yet I allow you this, That altho’ both Repentance and the Fruits thereof are in *some Sense* necessary before Justification, yet

nor the other is necessary in the *same Sense* or in the *same Degree* with Faith. Not in the *same Degree*. For in whatever Moment a Man believes (in the Christian Sense of the Word) he is justified, his Sins are blotted out, *his Faith is counted to him for Righteousness*. But it is not so, at whatever Moment he repents, or brings forth any or all the Fruits of Repentance. Faith alone therefore justifies; which Repentance alone does not; much less any outward Work. And consequently, none of these are necessary to Justification, in the *same Degree* with Faith.

Nor in the *same Sense*. For none of these has so direct, immediate a Relation to Justification as Faith. This is *proximately* necessary thereto; Repentance, *remotely*, as it is necessary to the Increase or Continuance of Faith. And even in this Sense, these are only necessary, on Supposition if there be Time and Opportunity for them: For in many Instances there is not: But GOD cuts short his Work, and Faith prevents the Fruits of Repentance, so that the general Proposition is not overthrown, but clearly established by these Concessions; and we conclude still, both on the Authority of Scripture and the Church, That Faith alone is the proximate Condition of Justification.

II. 1. I have now shewn at large, what is the Doctrine I teach with regard to Justification, and have taught, ever since I was convinced of it myself, by carefully reading the New Testament and the Homilies. In many Points, I apprehend, it agrees with yours; in some, it does not: These I come now to consider. May GOD enable me to do it, in Love and Meekness of Wisdom!

You say, P. 7. "Happy Times, when *Faith* and a *good Life* were synonymous Terms." I conceive, they never were. Is not Faith the Root, a good Life the Tree springing therefrom?

P. 9. " That Good Works are a necessary Condition of our Justification, may be proved, 1. From exprefs Testimonies of Scripture: So *Isaiab i. 16. Cease from Evil, learn to do well. Then your Sins that were as Scarlet, shall be white as Snow.* Here *ceasing from Evil*, and *learning to do well*, are the Conditions of Pardon." I answer, without them there is no Pardon; yet the immediate Condition of it is Faith. He that believeth, and he alone, is justified before GOD. " So *Ezekiel xxxiii. 14. If the Sinner turn from his evil Ways, and walk in the Statutes of Life, then all his Sins shall not be once mentioned to him.*" Most sure; that is, if he believe; else, whatever his outward Walking be, he cannot be justified.

The next Scripture you cite, ^a *Matt. xi. 28,* proves no more than this, that none find Rest to their Souls, unless they first come to Christ (namely by Faith) and then obey him.

But " he says, *Ye are my Friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*" He does so: But how does it appear, that this relates to Justification at all?

" St. Peter also declares, ^b *In every Nation he that feareth GOD and worketh Righteousness is accepted of him.*" He is: but none can either fear GOD or work Righteousness, till he believes, according to the Dispensation he is under. " An St. John, *He that doth Righteousness is righteous.* I do not see, that this proves any Thing. " An again, ^c *If we walk in the Light as GOD is in the Light, then have we Communion with him, and the Blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanseth us from all Sin.*" This would prove something if it could be proved, that *cleansing us from all Sin*, meant only Justification.

^a Sermon, p. 10.

^b Acts x. 34.

^c 1 John i. 7.

“ The Scriptures insist upon the Necessity of Repentance in particular for that Purpose. But Repentance comprehends Compunction, Humiliation, Hatred of Sin, Confession of it, Prayer for Mercy, ceasing from Evil, a firm Purpose to do well, Restitution of ill-got Goods, Forgiveness of all who have done us Wrong, and Works of Beneficence^a.” I believe it does comprehend all these, either as Parts or as Fruits of it: And it comprehends “ the Fear,” but not “ the Love of GOD:” That flows from a higher Principle. And he who loves GOD is not barely in the right Way to Justification: He is actually justified. The rest of the Paragraph asserts just the same Thing, which was asserted in those Words, ‘ Previous to justifying Faith must be Repentance, and if Opportunity permits, *Fruits meet for Repentance.*’ But still I must observe, that “ neither one nor the other is necessary, either in the *same Sense* or in the *same Degree* with Faith.” No Scripture Testimony can be produced, which any way contradicts This.

2. “ That Works are a necessary Condition of our Justification, may be proved, secondly, from Scripture Examples: Particularly those recited in the eleventh Chapter of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*. These all *thro’ Faith wrought Righteousness*; without *working Righteousness*, they had never obtained *the Promises*^b.” I say the same Thing: None are finally saved, but those whose Faith *worketh by Love*.

“ Even in the Thief upon the Cross, Faith was attended by Repentance, Piety and Charity.” It was; Repentance went before his Faith: Piety and Charity accompanied it. “ Therefore he was not justified by Faith alone.” Our Church, adopting

the Words of St. *Chrysostom*, expressly affirms in the Passage above cited, He was justified by Faith alone. And her Authority ought to weigh more than even that of Bp. *Bull*, or that of any single Man whatever. Authority, be pleased to observe, I plead against Authority; Reason against Reason.

It is no Objection, That the Faith whereby he was justified, *immediately produced* Good Works.

3. How we are justified by *Faith alone*, and yet by such a *Faith* as is *not alone*: It may be proper to explain. And this also I chuse to do, not in my own Words, but in those of our Church.

“ Faith doth not shut out Repentance, Hope, Love, and the Fear of God, to be joined with Faith in every Man that is justified; but it shutteth them out from the Office of justifying. So that altho’ they be all present together in him that is justified, yet they justify not all together.” Neither doth Faith shut out Good Works, necessarily to be done *afterwards*, of Duty towards God.”

“ That we are justified only by this Faith in Christ, speak all the antient Authors: Specially *Origen*, St. *Cyprian*, St. *Chrysostom*, *Hilary*, *Basil*, St. *Ambrose* and St. *Augustin*.

4. You go on. “ Thirdly, ^b if we consider the Nature of Faith, it will appear impossible that a Man should be justified by that alone. Faith is either an *Assent* to the Gospel Truths, or a Reliance on the Gospel Promises. I know of no other Notion of Faith.”

I do: An ἑλεῖχος ^c *things not seen*: Which is far more than a bare *Assent*, and yet *toto genere* different from a *Reliance*. Therefore if you prove, that neither an *Assent* nor a *Reliance* justifies, nor both of them together, still you do not prove, that we are not justified by Faith, even by Faith alone. But how do you prove, that

^a *Homily on the Salvation of Man.*

^b P. 15.

we cannot be justified by Faith as a Reliance on the Promises? Thus. "Such a Reliance must be founded on a Consciousness of having perform'd the Conditions. And a Reliance so founded is the Result of Works wrought *thro' Faith*." No: Of Works wrought *without Faith*: Else the Argument implies a Contradiction. For it runs thus (on the Supposition that *Faith* and *Reliance* were synonymous Terms) such a Reliance is the Result of Works wrought thro' such a Reliance.

5. Your fourth Argument against Justification by Faith alone, is drawn from the *Nature* of Justification. This, you observe, "implies a Prisoner at the Bar, and a Law by which he is to be tried; and this is not the Law of *Moses*, but that of Christ, requiring Repentance and Faith, with their proper Fruits ^b," which now thro' the Blood of Christ, are accepted and *counted for Righteousness*. St. Paul affirms this, concerning Faith, in the fourth Chapter of his Epistle to the *Romans*. But where does he say, That either Repentance or its Fruits are counted for Righteousness? Nevertheless I allow, that the Law of Christ requires such Repentance and Faith before Justification, as, if there be Opportunity, will bring forth the *Fruits of Righteousness*. But if there be not, he that repents and believes is justified notwithstanding. Consequently, these alone are necessary, *indispensably necessary* Conditions of our Justification.

^a 6. Your last Argument against Justification by Faith alone, "is drawn from the Method of GOD's proceeding at the Last Day. He will then judge every Man *according to his Works*. If therefore Works wrought thro' Faith, are the Ground of the Sentence pass'd upon us in that Day, then are they a necessary Condition of our Justification ^c:" In

other Words, " If they are a Condition of our *final*, they are a Condition of our *present* Justification." I cannot allow the Consequence. All Holiness must precede our entering into Glory. But no Holiness can exist, till *being justified by Faith, we have Peace with G O D, thro' our Lord Jesus Christ.*

7. You next attempt to reconcile the Writings of St. Paul with Justification by Works. In order to this you say, " In the three first Chapters of his Epistle to the *Romans*, he proves that both *Jews* and *Gentiles* must have Recourse to the Gospel of Christ. To this End he convicts the whole World of Sin. And having *stopped every Mouth*, he makes his Inference, *Therefore by the Deeds of the Law, there shall no Flesh be justified. We conclude, then,* says he, *a Man is justified by Faith, without the Deeds of the Law.* But here arise two Questions, first, What are the Works excluded from justifying? secondly, What is the Faith which justifies?^a

" The Works excluded are *Heathen* and *Jewish* Works, set up as meritorious. This is evident from hence, That Heathens and carnal Jews are the Persons against whom he is arguing." Not so: He is arguing against all Mankind: He is " convicting *the whole World of Sin.*" His Concern is, to *stop every Mouth*, by proving, That *no Flesh*, none born of a Woman, no Child of Man, can *be justified by his own Works.* Consequently he speaks of *all* the Works of *all* Mankind, antecedent to Justification, whether *Jewish* or any other, whether supposed *Meritorious* or not, of which the Text says not one Word. Therefore *all Works* antecedent to Justification are excluded, and Faith is set in flat Opposition to them. *Unto him that worketh not but believeth, his Faith is counted to him for Righteousness.*

“ But what is the Faith to which he attributes Justification? That *which worketh by love* : Which is the same with the *new Creature*, and implies in it the keeping the Commandments of GOD.”

It is undoubtedly true, that nothing avails for our final Salvation without *καινή κτίσις*, a *new Creation*, and consequent thereon, a sincere, uniform Keeping of the Commandments of GOD. This St. Paul constantly declares. But where does he say, This is the Condition of our Justification? In the Epistles to the *Romans* and *Galatians* particularly, he vehemently asserts the contrary ; earnestly maintaining, That nothing is *absolutely necessary* to This, but *believing in him that justifieth the Ungodly* : Not the Godly ; not him that is already a *new Creature*, that previously keeps all the Commandments of GOD. He does this *afterward* : When he is justified by Faith, then his Faith *worketh by Love*.

Therefore there is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, justified by Faith in him, provided they walk in him whom they have received, not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit. But should they turn back, and walk again after the Flesh, they would again be under Condemnation. But this no way proves, That walking after the Spirit was the Condition of their Justification.

Neither will any thing like this follow, from the Apostle's saying to the *Corinthians*, *Tho' I had all Faith, so as to remove Mountains*, and have not Charity, I am nothing. This only proves, that *miracle-working* Faith may be, where *saving* Faith is not.

8. To the Argument, “ St. Paul says, *Abraham was justified by Faith*,” you answer, “ St. James says, *Abraham was justified by Works*.” True : But he neither speaks of the same *Justification*, nor the same Faith, nor the same Works. Not of the same

Justification; for St. *Paul* speaks of that Justification which was five and twenty Years before *Isaac* was born ^a: St. *James* of that wherewith he was justified, *when he offered up Isaac* on the Altar. It is *living Faith*, whereby St. *Paul* affirms we are justified: It is *dead Faith*, whereby St. *James* affirms we are not justified. St. *Paul* speaks of *Works* antecedent to Justification: St. *James* of *Works* consequent upon it. This is the plain, easy, natural Way of reconciling the two Apostles.

The Fact was manifestly this: 1. When *Abraham* dwelt in *Haran*, being then seventy five Years old, GOD called him thence: He *believed GOD*, and he counted it to him for *Righteousness*. That is, he was justified by *Faith*, as St. *Paul* strenuously asserts. 2. Many Years after *Isaac* was born (some of the Antients thought, three and thirty) *Abraham* shewing his *Faith* by his *Works*, offered him up upon the Altar. 3. Here the *Faith* by which, in St. *Paul's* Sense, he was justified long before, wrought together with his *Works*, and he was justified, in St. *James's* Sense, that is, (as the Apostle explains his own Meaning) *By Works* his *Faith* was made perfect. GOD confirmed, increased and perfected the Principle, from which those *Works* sprang.

9. Drawing to a Conclusion you say, "What Pity so many Volumes should have been written upon the Question, Whether a Man be justified by *Faith* OR *Works*, seeing they are two essential Parts of the same Thing ^b?" If by *Works* you understand Inward and Outward Holiness, both *Faith* and *Works* are essential Parts of Christianity: And yet they are essentially different, and by GOD himself contradistinguished from each other. And that is the very Question before us, *Him that worketh not but believeth*. Therefore, whether a Man be justified by *Faith* OR *Works*, is a Point of the last Im-

portance : Otherwise our Reformers could not have answered to G O D, their spending so much Time upon it. Indeed they were both too wise and too good Men, to have " wrote so many Volumes" on a trifling or needless Question.

10. If in speaking on this important Point, (such at least it appears to *me*) I have said any Thing offensive, any that implies the least Degree of Anger or Disrespect, it was entirely foreign to my Intention : Nor indeed have I any Provocation. I have no Room to be angry at your maintaining what you believe to be the Truth of the Gospel : Even tho' I might wish you had omitted a few Expressions,

*Quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura.*

In the general, from all I have heard concerning you, I cannot but very highly esteem you in Love. And that GOD may give you both " a right Judgment in all Things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy Comfort," is the Prayer of,

REVEREND SIR,

Your affectionate Brother and Servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

